

REMARKS

The Office Action dated November 8, 2005, has been carefully reviewed and the following remarks are submitted in response thereto. Claims 1-7 are pending in the application.

The rejection of claims 1-6 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sitaraman in view of Middeldorp is respectfully traversed. Claim 1 recites a method of managing user connection sessions with a gateway wherein user status information is stored in a table in a separate RADIUS server during times that an authenticated user session is established with the gateway. After a failure of the gateway, it sends a request to the RADIUS server to provide the user status information and user data corresponding to each user in the table. The user data is re-stored on said gateway so that the gateway routes user traffic to continue the authenticated user session in response to the user data and the user status information without requiring re-authentication following the failure.

Sitaraman et al provides a network system for managing dynamic IP address assignment. An AAA service which may include the RADIUS protocol is used by Sitaraman to determine whether a user attempting to log in is authorized to obtain an IP address (col. 7, line 58 to col. 8, line 4). As stated at col. 7, lines 7-9, the “AAA service 10 is implemented in a computer, preferably the same machine or server as that of the protocol gateway 4...” Sitaraman fails to either teach or suggest maintaining user data on a gateway for routing user traffic according to authenticated user sessions, storing the user data in a RADIUS server which is physically separate from the gateway, and restoring the user data from the RADIUS server to the gateway after a gateway failure. The possibility of the components of Sitaraman being on two different machines does not lead to the conclusion that Sitaraman suggests the invention of claim 1. Rather, the fact that Sitaraman functions equivalently whether its two functions are on the same machine or on different machines is proof that Sitaraman is not performing the functions recited in claim 1 which can only be performed by two separate machines.

It is clear from claim 1 that an authenticated user session is established with the gateway based on user data stored in the gateway. At that time, user status information is also stored in the RADIUS server. Prior to a failure, the gateway routes user traffic in response to the user data. After a failure of the gateway in which the user data for routing traffic is lost, the user data is restored on the gateway from the RADIUS server to continue the authenticated user session without requiring re-authentication following the failure. Whether or not Sitaraman uses one or two machines, nothing in its disclosure is suggestive of a redundant storage of user data for authenticated user sessions on another machine. Although Sitaraman backs-up information for a database of allocated IP addresses, this also is not suggestive of the claimed method of managing user connection sessions that stores user data on the gateway in response to authentication by the user and that stores user status in the RADIUS server because storage of an IP address allocation is insufficient to establish the information needed to continue an already authenticated session between the user and the gateway. In particular, nothing in Sitaraman suggests any method that would allow a gateway to continue an authenticated user session without requiring re-authentication following a failure of the gateway.

The addition of newly cited Middledorp fails to strengthen the rejection. Middledorp does not relate to user authentication at all. It discloses a network of computer nodes of a process system, i.e., a process employed to produce amounts of a desired products using vats, transfer lines, machinery and the like (column 1, lines 11-19). The host processor and various workstations of Middledorp are part of a closed system wherein not particular individual users are identified at each workstation. Middledorp does not place security barriers between workstations and does not authenticate any users. Instead, Middledorp uses gateways as interpreters between various potentially-incompatible computer programs. Since Middledorp lacks storage of any user data, it likewise cannot request user status or user data after failure of a gateway. Thus, the combination of Sitaraman and Middledorp fails to teach or suggest the invention as claimed in independent claim 1 or its dependent claims 2-6.

The rejection of claim 7 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sitaraman in view of Middledorp and further in view of Zhang is respectfully traversed. Since Zhang fails to correct for the deficiencies of Sitaraman and Middledorp, claim 7 is likewise allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, claims 1-7 are now in condition for allowance. Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mark L. Mollon", is written over a horizontal line.

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